

Clinch River/Poplar Creek Surface Water ROD

Scope: The Clinch River/Poplar Creek (CR/PC) Surface Water Record of Decision (ROD) project will select a surface water remedy for the CR/PC operable unit (OU), an area outside the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR) and downgradient of ORR facilities. The project objective is to reach a final surface water decision for CR/PC. The remedy will be selected and implemented under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) process. The project will:

- Prepare a remedial investigation (RI)/feasibility study (FS), Proposed Plan and ROD for regulatory approval, including evaluation of public comments; and
- Prepare a plan for future monitoring and institutional controls of the area.

The CR/PC OU receives all surface waters leaving the ORR and has received many ORR-related contaminants over the years. A previous ROD was signed in 1997¹ to address sediment and biota within the CR/PC OU. The 1997 ROD deferred a CR/PC surface water decision until after remediation of upstream contaminant sources. The CR/PC Surface Water ROD project is planned by the Integrated Facility Disposition Program (IFDP) at an estimated cost of \$5M, which is based on an assumed remedy of monitored natural attenuation.

Environmental Risk and Principal Threat Source Material Rating: **Low**

- The 1996 RI/FS² identified two primary risks to human health in the CR/PC OU:
 - Exposure to mercury, chromium, arsenic, and Cesium-137 in the deep sediment of the main river channel; and
 - Exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), chlordane, arsenic, and mercury in fish tissue.
- In order to limit access and exposure to contaminated fish and sediment, institutional controls for CR/PC, including fish advisories and permit controls on sediment-disturbing activities, continue to be implemented as part of the 1997 ROD remedy. Continued monitoring of surface water, sediment, and biota, and a survey of local irrigation practices are also part of the selected remedy. Monitoring and survey data will be used to prepare the planned CR/PC Surface Water ROD, which is anticipated to require continuation of the institutional controls and monitoring.
- CR/PC surface water meets current drinking water standards and remains safe for human consumption.

Other Prioritization Factors:

Because all ORR surface waters flow into the CR/PC OU, a final CR/PC surface water decision will be determined after completion of upstream source remediation and final watershed decisions at the three Oak Ridge sites (Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and East Tennessee Technology Park).

Overall Prioritization: **Low**

The CR/PC Surface Water ROD project is the last ROD scheduled for completion by IFDP. The overall prioritization for the Clinch River/Poplar Creek Surface Water ROD project is **Low**.

The information presented in this fact sheet is preliminary and will be refined during Critical Decision-2/3 development.

¹ Record of Decision for the Clinch River/Poplar Creek Operable Unit, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, DOE/OR/02-1547&D3, DOE 1997

² Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study of the Clinch River/Poplar Creek Operable Unit, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, DOE/OR/01-1393&D3, DOE 1996

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For more information, please contact the DOE public affairs office at (865) 576-0885.

